

**Meeting Notes**  
**North Delta Agency Team**  
**July 2, 2002**

The following provides a summary of the North Delta Agency Team Meeting held on July 2, 2002. The group agreed to meet again on **September 3, 2002, 9:30 – 11:30, at Jones & Stokes' 19<sup>th</sup> Street Office (2125 19<sup>th</sup> Street).**

**Attendees:**

Chuck Vogelsang - CALFED	Gwen Knittweis - DWR
Ken Trott - CDFA	Margit Aramburu - DPC
Ryan Olah - USFWS	Collette Zemitis - DWR
Rosalie Del Rosario - NMFS	Keith Whitener - TNC
Aimee Dour-Smith - J&S	Evelyne Gulli - SLC
Carl Werder - USBR	Ron Ott - CALFED
Chris Kimball - DWR	Jeannie Blakeslee - DOC/DCRP
Paul Bowers - USACE	Suzanne DeLeon - DFG
Sara Martin - J&S	

**Members Invited but not Present:**

April Zohn - J&S	Bellory Fong - CALFED
Frank Wernette - DFG	Dennis O'Bryant - DOC
John Thomson - USFWS	Doug Morrison - USFWS
Mike Aceituno - NMFS	Tony Frisbee - CALFED
Diane Windham - NMFS	Terry Mills - CALFED
Pete Rabbon - DWR/Rec Board	Steve Shaffer - CDFA
Dennis Majors - CALFED	Rod Johnson - CALFED
Craig Stevens - J&S	Jim Starr - DFG
Kathy Dadey - EPA	Matthew Reischman - CVRWQCB
Marina Brand - DFG	Mike Jewel - USACE
Travis Hemmen - J&S	Jeff Stuart - NMFS
Laura Fujii - EPA	Mike Coleman - CALFED
Mike Finan - USACE	Patricia Fernandez - CALFED
Scott Cantrell - DFG	Shelby McCoy - RWQCB

**Handouts:**

Previous Meeting Minutes  
EIR/EIS Outline - EIROutline-061102.doc  
CALFED Water Management Program Baseline Handouts (5 total)  
    - CV.Example.Shasta.xls  
    - CV.Assumptions.TermDefinition.doc  
    - CV.Assumptions.Matrix.xls  
    - CV.AttB.CEQAbaseline.doc  
    - CV.Assumptions.WaterMgmtAnalTeam.doc

**Notes:**

**I. Introductions**

Aimee Dour-Smith opened the meeting with a round of introductions and thanked everyone at the meeting for attending, as it was two days before the holiday. **EPA representatives** were also invited to the meeting, but unfortunately, no one from EPA could make it. However, Kathy Dady from the EPA Wetlands branch in San Francisco, has reviewed and provided comments on the project Purpose and Need Statement as well as the EIR

Outline. Margit Aramburu suggested that in the future, the NDAT may want to consider teleconferencing with out-of-towners such as Kathy Dady.

## II. Project Update

Gwen Knittweis provided the NDAT with a status report on the search for a **federal lead agency**. The North Delta team had been looking to the Bureau of Reclamation and the Regulatory division of the Corps for a potential federal lead, however it now looks like Corps Planning is the agency most likely to take this project on. Discussions are currently underway. However, if Corps Planning does indeed become the North Delta federal lead, it will be difficult to meet the ROD dates since Corps Planning has a very specific and regimented schedule. For this reason, the North Delta team is looking into partnering up with a feasibility study already in progress in order to minimize project delays due to Corps Regulatory scheduling.

Aimee mentioned that the North Delta team is continuing to move forward as if the report document will be an EIR/EIS; if Corps Planning becomes the federal lead, it may necessitate some changes to the scope of the analysis.

Aimee then gave an update on the status of the **hydraulic model**. MBK has the model up and running, although it remains to be fully calibrated and still has some instability issues. An orientation for the peer reviewers was held on June 26, and they are now working on a preliminary review of the model as well as a review of the assumptions used in the construction of the model. Chris Kimball expects the model and peer review process to be completed by September. A more detailed technical presentation on the model will be given by the engineers at the next NDAT meeting.

Aimee informed the NDAT that she, Gwen, and Pete Rawlings (J&S) have a meeting scheduled later in the day with a subcommittee of the **Delta-Wide Ecosystem Restoration Program Steering Committee**, which is interested in coordinating with the North Delta project. Basically, the goal of the meeting will be to share ideas and talk about priorities in the north delta area. Aimee will provide an update on outcome of this meeting at the next NDAT meeting in September.

## III. McCormack-Williamson Tract Fish/Aquatic Field Surveys

Keith Whitener of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) showed the NDAT a PowerPoint presentation on "**Native Versus Non-Native Use of Tidal Habitats in the North Delta**". The slide show presented raw data that has been collected by TNC and UC Davis in and around the Cosumnes Preserve over the last 5 years. Their grant is still one year away from completion, at which point they will be able to draw some meaningful conclusions from the data and provide a more comprehensive summary of their studies. One of the important observations already drawn from the studies is that the percent of native YOY fish caught each year is highly correlated with the number of days the river has connectivity with floodplains, which means that the native fish populations do very well when they are able to spawn in the floodplains. The invasive species, however, may spawn in the floodplains, but very often they get stuck in the floodplains as they begin to dry out; the natives have evolved to know when to get out of the floodplains before they get trapped. The seasonal timing for natives versus non-natives benefiting from the floodplain appears to also differ. Keith pointed out that this knowledge provides an opportunity to regulate the floodplains to produce native species almost exclusively. In addition, the presentation raised questions about the value of restoring shallow-water habitat; the study shows that invasive fish species have already out-competed the natives in shallow-water habitats, so the restoration of shallow-water habitats may not be helping the natives as previously thought.

## IV. CALFED Water Management Program "Common Assumptions" Meeting

The North Delta team has been working with CALFED to try and develop the baseline and no-project conditions for the project analysis. Chuck Vogelsang provided the NDAT with a report on CALFED's efforts to establish a process of **baseline analysis for use with hydraulic modeling** (e.g., CALSIM and DSM modeling). The result of their efforts is the "Common Assumptions for Water Management Analyses" matrix (CV.Assumptions.Matrix.xls) which outlines which conditions should be taken into consideration under which analyses. The "CALFED Baseline" assumes full funding and implementation of CALFED goals over the next 30 years. Aimee then reminded the group

that this baseline information is only for the Water Management program, and that the North Delta project team should be thinking about this type of information for each of the subject areas.

#### V. EIR/EIS Outline

Aimee handed out the new **EIR/EIS outline**, which has undergone some changes according to comments received from EPA and others. She explained that this outline is similar to the CALFED Programmatic EIR, since we are tiering from it, but that some of the subject areas on which the project won't have much impact have been consolidated. A generic example chapter has been included to show how the chapters will be organized, but does not reflect the actual information for that specific chapter. Aimee asked the group to review the outline and provide comments to her at [Adoursmith@jsanet.com](mailto:Adoursmith@jsanet.com) before the next meeting.

#### **Action Items:**

1. Review EIR/EIS outline and provide comments to Aimee Dour-Smith by September 3, 2002.

#### **Next meeting (Tuesday, September 3, 2002):**

- Presentation by MBK on the hydraulic model
- Provide update on the meeting (7/2/02) with the Delta Wide Ecosystem Restoration Steering Committee (Aimee)
- Provide update on federal lead agency and project schedule (Gwen)